

10 December 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

**SUBJECT: Revision of USIB Subcommittee Charters, Particularly
Those of JAEIC, GMIC and the SEC**

1. This memorandum contains recommendations with respect to the review of the DCID's governing the missions of JAEIC, GMIC, and the SEC.

2. The Board of National Estimates believes that the present mission of GMIC and SEC in support of NIE's - the production of "coordinated contributions" is proper. The Board favors revision of the JAEIC charter, which now provides for the preparation of "coordinated drafts" of NIE's, to conform to the wording of the GMIC and SEC charters (DCID 3/4).

3. While the difference in wording appears to be slight, there is a basic difference in principle. In brief, to give USIB Subcommittees the function of producing "coordinated drafts" of NIE's will expand the competence of these committees into fields far beyond their intended specialized missions. At the same time, it would dilute the role of the Director's senior estimating facility, the Board of National Estimates.

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If we grant this right to JAEIC (as is now the case) we cannot in logic deny it to GMIC, SEC, EIC, and even the International Communism or Resistance Subcommittees. The Board of National Estimates does not regard its proper role as being confined primarily to those fields in which USIB Subcommittees do not happen to exist.

4. We do not mean to minimize the role of the IB Subcommittees or to invade their proper fields. The Board's relations with them have been uniformly excellent over many years. However, some of the Subcommittees appear to feel that the present coordination procedures are duplicatory, and that the Subcommittees should be authorized to produce NIE's on their own account, with the Board invited to comment. We cannot accept this line of thinking for the following reasons.

a. In the past the Board has been able to make major substantive contributions even on technical estimates, as in the celebrated bomber controversy.

b. In fact, however, a "technical" NIE is seldom based exclusively on purely technical considerations within the exclusive competence of a specialist group. Instead, almost invariably broader questions of overall Bloc policy, strategic concepts, economic capabilities, and psychological factors

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must be brought into play. For example, in a missile estimate, the key question of Soviet intentions to produce, as opposed to technical capabilities to do so, depends upon a broad range of factors well beyond the exclusive competence of GMIC. Moreover, the importance of the primarily technical considerations in any given field tend to diminish as the weapons system matures. At that stage the interesting problems are those of the costs of the weapons system, the probable course of decisions respecting weapons mix; intentions respecting strategic use, implications for foreign policy, and so on.

c. The Board also plays a key role in reviewing and where necessary, reconciling the often conflicting views of the specialists, frequently on grounds which are beyond the latter's purview. Admittedly this process is time-consuming, but it should be an indispensable prerequisite to any paper on which the DCI is willing to stake his reputation as a national intelligence estimate.

5. The Board has great latitude in fulfilling its responsibilities for the production of NIE's and is accustomed to making ad hoc arrangements both as to procedures and as to format to meet particular

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circumstances. The Board is prepared to produce long and detailed technical papers, brief and general papers, or a combination of the two depending on the current needs of the consumers.

RECOMMENDATION

6. In light of the above, we recommend that in the revision of the charters of the USIB Subcommittees:

a. Each of the technical Subcommittees should be assigned a similar role in the production of NIE's.

b. National estimates in technical fields (including atomic energy, guided missiles, long-range bombers, chemical warfare, economics, and scientific and technical capabilities) should be prepared under normal procedures as set forth in new series DCID 1/1 para. 3 (which allows for special arrangements when necessary and desirable).

c. Therefore, the new charter of each technical Subcommittee should give it the responsibility of preparing "co-ordinated contributions, in whole or in part" to national intelligence estimates.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:

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